

Oxfam America President said, "It is now evident that we cannot, in reasonable safety, get food to hungry Afghan people. We've reached the point where it is simply unrealistic for us to do our job in Afghanistan. We've run out of food, the borders are closed, we can't reach our staff, and time's running out."

The World Food Program was feeding 3.8 million people a day in Afghanistan even before the bombing campaign began. These included 900,000 internally displaced people at camps. Although the United States military has dropped thousands of ready to eat meals, everyone agrees that only truck convoys can move sufficient food into Afghanistan before winter. As of last Friday, there were only two convoys confirmed to have gotten through. WFP announced that two more convoys since the bombing campaign started were nearing Kabul.

Complications and delays in delivering emergency food supplies to Afghanistan could cause rising death rates from starvation and illness as winter sets in. Many of the high mountain passes will be closed by mid-November due to 20–30 foot snows.

Aid agencies are falling behind in their efforts to deliver enough emergency relief to Afghans to avoid a large loss of life this winter. UNICEF estimates that, in addition to the total of 300,000 Afghan children who die of "preventable causes" each year, 100,000 more children might die this winter from hunger and disease.

The main reasons for this shortfall in aid are related to security concerns. Aid agencies have withdrawn their international staff, and local staff have attempted to continue the aid programs but have been subjected to intimidation, theft, and harassment. As the United States continues to pound Taliban targets, law and order in some cities is reportedly also breaking down. Truck drivers are unwilling to deliver supplies to some areas for fear of being bombed by the United States, or being attacked by one faction or another. Taliban supporters have obstructed aid deliveries on some occasions.

Despite these nightmares, shipment of food and nonfood emergency items arrive in Afghanistan daily—but the total shipped is only about one-half of what is needed. The situation is particularly urgent as some of the poorest and most needy areas will be cut off from overland routes by mid-November. An estimated 600,000 people in the Central Highlands are dependent upon international food aid, and little is on hand for them now.

The food shortfall in Afghanistan may result in an increased flow of refugees to the borders. A flood of refugees to the border would present a different but also challenging set of problems. Clearly, as everyone has said, it is better for them to remain at home than flee to neighboring countries out of hunger.

There is no easy solution to this humanitarian crisis. It is complex and re-

quires the international community to take urgent and imaginative action to boost the flow of food inside. The United States should take the lead in helping to devise aggressive and imaginative ways to expand the delivery of food. These could include the creation of humanitarian corridors, the use of existing commercial trading companies and air deliveries to airports that have not yet been bombed.

The establishment of humanitarian ground and air corridors should be considered for the secure transportation and distribution of emergency aid. The administration should push to have some roads or air routes in areas of limited conflict be designated as protected humanitarian routes. Such possible ground and air corridors include Northern Alliance held territory along the border of Tajikistan, and Northern Alliance airfields which have not been bombed. These airfields could be used for a Berlin style airlift to get massive amounts of aid into the country quickly.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees estimates that 1.5 million additional Afghans could seek to flee the country in coming months due to the ongoing military conflict.

All six countries neighboring Afghanistan have closed their borders to refugees both on security grounds and citing an inability to economically provide for more refugees. Thousands have been trapped at borders with no food, shelter, water, or medical care.

I am introducing a resolution today which addresses this crisis. The text of the resolution states the following:

Afghanistan's neighbors should reopen their borders to allow for the safe passage of refugees, and the international community must be prepared to contribute to the economic costs incurred by the flight of desperate Afghan civilians;

As the United States engages in military action in Afghanistan, it must work to deliver assistance, particularly through overland truck convoys, and safe humanitarian access to affected populations, in partnership with humanitarian agencies in quantities sufficient to alleviate a large scale humanitarian catastrophe;

The United States should contribute to efforts by the international community to provide long-term, sustainable reconstruction and development assistance for the people of Afghanistan, including efforts to protect the basic human rights of women and children.

I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

Mr. President, I spoke yesterday in this Chamber in relation to this resolution I am submitting today. I will offer this as an amendment on legislation to have a vote.

I think we in America are probably as united as we can be as a people, especially when it comes to our horror and sadness, indignation and anger at the innocent slaughter of so many people, so many Americans.

In response to that, a resolution was passed authorizing the use of force, targeted on those who committed this act, hopefully drawing a distinction between justice and vengeance.

I think most of us also believe—and certainly Secretary Powell has said this more than once, as it is terribly important—that the use of force, the military action, must be as targeted as possible; that every step be taken that is humanly possible to avoid innocent people being killed, innocent Afghans who had nothing to do with the murders in our country.

I worry to the extent that there are reports that innocent people have been killed in the bombing. I certainly worry about that. Our country wants to avoid that. Moreover, there is also the whole question of the Islamic world and how people respond to this. So, again, I will make the point that this has to be as carefully targeted as possible.

But the other issue, which I do not think we have paid enough attention to—and I had a chance to write a piece for the Boston Globe a couple weeks ago, and I am going to start speaking about this in the Chamber more, and I think there is a lot of strong bipartisan interest and support for this—is the whole question of this humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan.

The reports are there are about 7.5 million people who go hungry. We do not know how many hundreds of thousands could starve to death this winter if we do not get food to people.

The problem is, though there has been a lot of discussion about the air-drops, maybe a half of 1 percent, maybe 1 percent at best, doesn't do the job. The only way we can get the food to people is through the truck convoys, and now not nearly enough of this is happening.

Different organizations, the NGOs, the nongovernment organizations, food relief organizations, are all saying on present course they may be able to get enough food for half the people who need it at best. In 3 or 4 weeks there will be cold winter weather, and we will see pictures of innocent, starving Afghan children. That is a fact.

The resolution calls upon our Government to take stronger measures, with a more focused effort to get the food to people. That will be complicated. Part of it involves people who will still be trying to leave Afghanistan. Some of the neighboring countries have to open up their borders. Those people have been stopped at the borders. Then there are the people who don't leave. And the conditions in the refugee camps have to be dramatically improved.

The fact is, the people who don't leave are the poorest of the poor. They are the elderly, the infirmed; they are the children. They are the ones about whom we all worry. There have been intermittent reports—quite often when you try to confirm it, it is not clear what happened—that the Taliban itself